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CHRISTMAS 1899

WITH PRESENTATION PICTURE.

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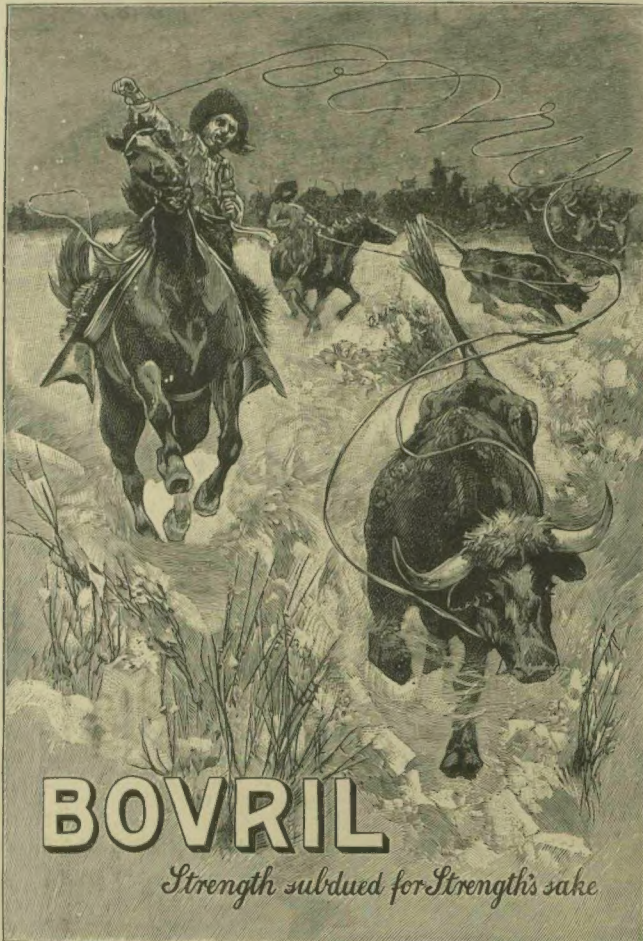
CHRISTMAS CAROL



"Lady fair, and yet sincere,
Tell me, at thy leisure,
With thy humble servant here
Wilt thou tread a measure?"

1799.

"Gentle Sir, one lingers by
For whose sake I kept it;
Yet, so sweet thy offer, I
Cannot but accept it."



Health and Strength from over the Sea.

On the far-reaching prairies of the Argentine and other parts of South America, as well as on the fertile pastures of Australasia, are reared the fine cattle from which the oxen are selected for the preparation of Bovril. These cattle are bred under such perfect natural conditions, and at so small a cost, that the manufacturers of Bovril are enabled to guarantee that none but the prime ox beef is used in the production of that world-famous concentrated food. Hence its well-earned reputation for purity and strength.

Bovril is the cook's right hand. It adds a delicious savour to all kinds of "made" dishes, whether of meat, poultry or game. With Bovril the most inexpensive dish becomes a luxury; and for making nourishing soups and gravies Bovril is in almost universal use.

Bovril possesses both stimulating and strengthening properties in the highest degree. It is warmth-giving and sustaining. A hot cup of Bovril between meals is an invaluable safeguard against the effects of cold and chills, and taken before retiring, Bovril will be found the most comfortable of "night-caps."

"Cocoa, Sak!"



"NO BETTER FOOD."

Dr. Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., &c.



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PURE CONCENTRATED
Cocoa

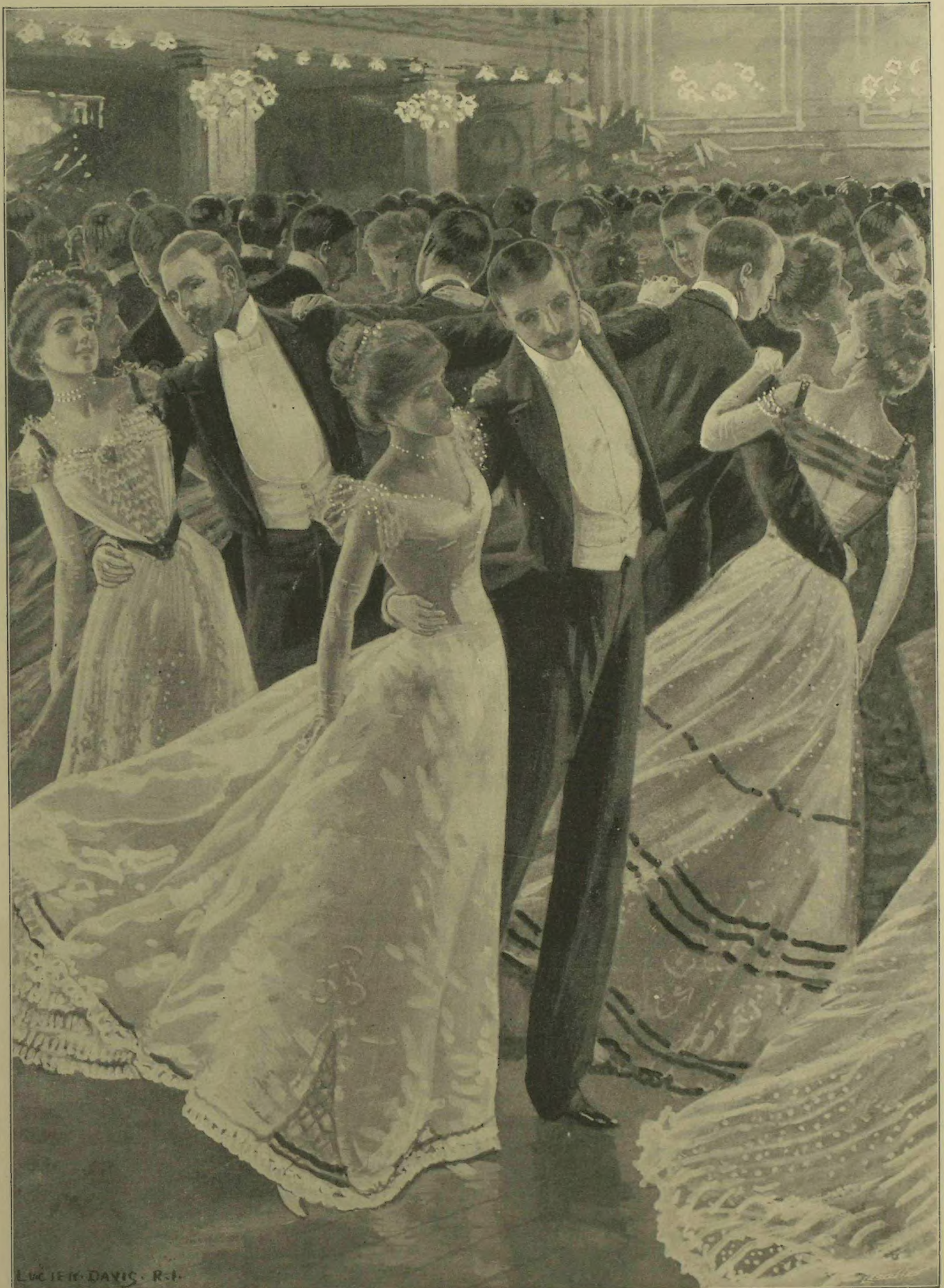
The MEDICAL PRESS, including the "LANCET," "BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL," and "MEDICAL ANNUAL," testifies to its

ABSOLUTE PURITY.

275 Gold Medals, &c.

CAUTION.—Refuse Substitutes which are frequently pushed to secure additional profit. Fry's Pure Concentrated Cocoa is sold only in Tins with Gilt Tops.

Photo. E. S. Porter.



"Number twelve: our dance, I think.
Eh? I'm wrong, no doubt;
Never mind, I'll have a drink
While you sit it out."

1899.

"Wait. He's sure to be a bore
If he does turn up;
And he should have come before:
Take me down to sup."



In olden days, when men were young
And blunt in tongue,
When maids were fresh as morning dew
And hearts were true,

1799.

Then the proud knight on bended knee
Would plead; and she
Would think no scorn, but kindest felt
Towards him who knelt.



But that is changed ; now from above
We tell our love ;
Whilst she keeps time with "Beauty's Eyes,"
Or lullabies.

1899.

And yet I deem the run of men
As good as then ;
And maids are just as sweet, I know,
As years ago.



Through the lych and down the path
Which his fathers trod,
See the squire lead forth his dame
From the House of God.

1799.

How the tenants stand around
Well may we observe,
Honouring in loyalty
Him they love to serve.



Now their children own no squire,
Wait no kindly face,
Seek no sympathy from those
Ruling in his place.

1899.

Yet they have his deeds set forth
On the old church wall,
Where in love they come to meet
One great Squire of all.



Heigho for the days of yore!
When every man was rich and free,
When every suitor rode a gee,
When every maid was fair to see—
Those were the dear old times for me;
Heigho for the days of yore!

1799.

And yet in the days of yore
It took three days to get to York,
And those in a hurry had to walk;
Whilst blue-nosed girls, with cheeks of chalk,
Were much too muffled up to talk;
Oh, bother the days of yore!



Who wants a motor-car ?
Though wives may storm and daughters weep,
Yet purses short and prices steep
Make motors much too frail to keep
So long as trains are swift and cheap :
Who wants a motor-car ?

1899.

No maid who has her wheel :
She loves to curl, and twist and wind,
She loves the cart-ruts intertwined,
And, if the Fates are very kind,
She loves the man that rides behind
And drives the skidding wheel.



Two bashful youths, each longing to disengage
A maiden—quite the fairest ever seen,
Yet dumb with terror, lest they fail to dodge
The prehistoric lady in between.

THE FIRST DANCE: NONE BUT THE
BRAVE DESERVE THE FAIR.

Ah, mock not, callous youth or hardened maid
Twirling from eve to morn on tireless toe;
You shiver ere the opening bars are played;
They shivered just a century ago.



But when the harp-strings twang and fiddles wail,
Soft glances put such scruples all to flight.
Young smiles o'er old maids' terrors soon prevail;
Venus and Cupid reign throughout the night.

THE LAST DANCE: LOVE BRAVES ALL
FOR LOVE'S SWEET SAKE..

Then, while the boys and girls make quick the pace,
Their elders tread a measure grave and slow:
For, as to-day we worship stately grace,
So did they just a century ago.



Five old monks at a table sat;
Four were plump and one was fat.
Each had a hunger, each a thirst;
But the fat monk claimed his helping first.

"SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE."

Up from below, in haste absurd,
Came the cook with a splendid bird;
Tripped in the doorway, spilt the sauce—
And the fat goose was helped first, of course.

Tomaso's Fortune.

BY HENRY SETON MERRIMAN.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. FORESTIER



From

Dr. REDWOOD, Ph.D., F.I.C., F.C.S., &c.Late Professor of Chemistry and Pharmacy to the Pharmaceutical Society
of Great Britain.**PURE AND DURABLE—**IN OTHER WORDS, **GOOD AND CHEAP.**

"Being authorised by Messrs. Pears to purchase at any time,
 "and of any dealers, samples of their Soap (thus ensuring such
 "samples being of exactly the same quality as is supplied to the
 "general public), and to submit same to the strictest chemical analysis,
 "I am enabled to guarantee the invariable purity of this Soap.

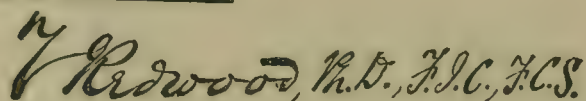
"The proportion of alkalies to fats is absolutely chemically correct.
 "In a perfect toilet soap neither preponderates (the immense importance
 "of which the public have not yet been 'educated up' to realising).
 "An excess of alkali or an excess of fat being very injurious,
 "and even dangerous to a sensitive skin.

"It is also free from any admixture of artificial colouring sub-
 "stances, its well-known dark amber tint being entirely due to the
 "natural colour of the materials used in its manufacture.

"The perfumes introduced are pure, agreeable, and perfectly
 "harmless.

"No water has been added. Water is quite commonly added in
 "the manufacture of soaps to increase their weight (some containing
 "as much as 30 to 40 per cent.), but PEARS' SOAP is entirely free
 "from any such admixture, and thus being *all soap instead of soap and*
 "*water*, it is remarkably lasting, that is to say, that whilst producing an
 "abundant lather it is not quickly worn away in use, and wears down
 "to the smallest possible piece; there being consequently no waste
 "it is really a remarkably cheap article.

"My analytical and practical experience of PEARS' SOAP now
 "extends over a very lengthened period—nearly fifty years—during
 "which time I have never come across another Toilet Soap which
 "so closely comes up to my ideal of perfection; its purity is such
 "that it may be used with perfect confidence upon the tenderest and
 "most sensitive Skin—even that of a new-born babe."


 Dr. Redwood, Ph.D., F.I.C., F.C.S.



He shook his finger with a playful condescension at the widow Navarro.

TOMASO'S FORTUNE.

By HENRY SETON MERRIMAN.

Love
... reconciles
By mystic wiles
The evil and the good.

"YOU talk of poor men, Señora—then you talk of me. See, I have nothing but the wits that are under my hat."

And Felipe Fortis spread himself out on the trellis-bordered bench of the little Venta that stands at the junction of the Valdemosa Road and the new road from Miramar to Palma in the Island of Majorca.

Felipe was, of course, known to be a young man of present position and future prospects, or he would not have said such a thing. It was supposed, indeed, by some to be a great condescension that he should stop at the little Venta of the Break of Day and take his half of wine on market-days. And, of course, there were women who eagerly sought the woman in it, and said that Felipe drank the widow Navarro's sour wine to the bright eyes of the widow's daughter.

"No such luck for her," said Rosa's cousins and aunts, who were dotted all up the slopes of the valley on either side in their little stone cottages, right up from the river to the Val d'Erraha—that sunny valley of repose which lies far above the capital of Majorca, far above the hum of life and sound of the restless sea.

Felipe, who was a good-looking fellow, threw his hat down on the bench beside him. He had fair hair and a white skin—both, he understood, much admired by the dark-eyed daughters of the Balears. He shook his finger with a playful condescension at the widow Navarro, with whom he was always kind enough to exchange a few light pleasantries. And she, womanlike, suited her fire to the calibre of the foe, for she was an innkeeper.

"That is all—the wits that are under my hat," he repeated.

And Rosa, who was standing in the deep shadow of the doorway, muttered to herself—

"Then you are indeed a poor man."

Felipe glanced towards her, and wondered whether the sun was shining satisfactorily through the trellis on his fair hair.

Rosa looked at him with inscrutable eyes—deep as velvet, grave and meditative. She was slight and girlish, with dull blue-black hair and a face that might have been faithfully cut on a cameo. It was the colour of a sun-burnt peach, and usually wore that air of gentle pride which the Moors seem to have left behind them in those lands through which they passed, to the people upon whom they have impressed an indelible mark. But when she smiled, which was not often, her lips tilted suddenly at the corners in a way to make an old man young and a young man mad.

Tomaso of the Mill, who sat on the low wall across the road in the shadow of a great fig-tree, was watching with steady eyes. Tomaso was always watching Rosa. He had watched for years. She had grown up under that steady eye. And now, staring into the deep shadow of the cottage interior, he thought that he saw Rosa smile upon Felipe. And Felipe, of course, concluded that she was smiling at him. They all did that. And only Rosa knew the words that she had whispered respecting the gallant Felipe.

Tomaso of the Mill was a poor man if you like, and usually considered a dull one to boot. He only had the mill half-way up the hill to the Val d'Erraha—a mill to which no grist came now that there was steam communication between Palma and Barcelona, and it paid better to ship the produce of the island to the mainland, buying in return the adulterated produce of the Barcelona mills. Tomaso's

father had been a prosperous man almost to the day of his death, but times had moved on, leaving Tomaso and his mill behind. And there is no man who watches the times move past him with a prouder silence than the Spaniard. The mill hardly brought in ten pesetas a month now, and that was from friends—poor men like himself who were yet gentlemen, and found some carefully worded reason why they preferred home-milled flour. Tomaso, moreover, was deadly simple: there is nothing more fatal than simplicity in these days. It never occurred to him to sell his mill, or let it fall in ruins and go elsewhere for work. His world had always been bounded on the south by Val d'Erraha, on the north by the Valdemosa Road, on the west by the sea, and on the east by Rosa. He had never suffered from absolute hunger, and nothing but absolute hunger will make a Spaniard leave his home. So Tomaso of the Mill remained at the mill, and, like his forefathers, only repaired the sluices and conduit when the water-supply was no longer heavy enough to drive the creaking wheel.

Since the death of his mother he had lived alone, cooking his own food, washing his own clothes, and no man in the valley wore a whiter shirt. As to the food, perhaps there was not too much of it, or it may have been badly cooked: for Tomaso had a lean and hungry look, and his tanned cheek had diagonal lines drawn from the cheek-bone to the corner of the clean-shaven mouth. The lips were firm, the chin was long. It was a solemn face that looked out from beneath the shadow of the great fig-tree. And—there was no mistaking it—it was the face of that which the world calls a gentleman.

Felipe turned towards him in his good-natured grand way, and invited him by a jerk of the head to come and partake of his half-bottle of Majorcan wine. There was a great gulf between these two men, for Tomaso wore no jacket and Felipe was never seen without one. Tomaso therefore accepted the invitation with a grave courtesy. Felipe knew his manners also. He poured a few drops into his own glass, for fear the cork should have left a grain of dust, and then filled his guest's little thick tumbler to the brim. They touched glasses gravely and drank, Felipe making a swinging gesture towards Rosa in the dark doorway before raising the glass to his lips.

"And affairs at the mill?" inquired Felipe, with a movement of the hand, demanding pardon if the subject should be painful.

"The wheel is still," replied Tomaso, with that grand air of indifference with which Spain must eventually go to the wall. He slowly unrolled and re-rolled a cheap cigarette, and sat down on the bench opposite to Felipe.

Felipe looked at him with that bright and good-natured smile which was known to be so deadly. He spread out his arms in a gesture of lofty indifference.

"What will you?" he asked, with a laugh. "It will come—your fortune."

And Tomaso smiled gravely. He was quite convinced also, in his simple way, that his fortune would come; for it had been predicted by a gipsy from Granada at the Trinity Fair on the little crowded market-place at Palma. The prediction had caught the popular fancy. Tomaso's poverty, it must be remembered, was a proverb all over the island. "As poor as Tomaso of the Mill," the people said. It being understood that a church mouse failed to suggest such destitution. Moreover, the gipsy foretold that Tomaso should make his own fortune with his own two hands, which added to the joke, for no one in Majorca is guilty of such manual energy as will lead to more than a sufficiency.

"Now I say," continued Felipe, turning to the window with that unconscious way of discussing someone who happens to be present which is only understood in Southern worlds. "Now I say that when it comes it will have something to do with horses. See how he sits in the saddle!"

And Felipe sketched perfection with a little gesture of his brown hand. Which was generous of Felipe; for Tomaso was (by one of those strange chances which lead the Spaniards to say that God gives nuts to those who have no teeth) a born horseman and sat in the saddle like a god—one straight line from heel to shoulder.

Tomaso had risen from the bench and walked slowly across the road to his former seat on the low wall. He was a shy and rather modest man, and felt perhaps that there was a suggestion of condescension in Felipe's attitude. If Felipe had come here to pay his addresses to Rosa, he, Tomaso, was not the man to put difficulties in the way. For he was one of those rare men who in loving place themselves in the background. He loved Rosa, in a word, better than he loved himself. And in the solitude of his life at the mill he had worked out a grim problem in his own mind. He had weighed himself carefully in the balance, nothing extenuating. He had taken as precise a measure of Felipe Fortis with his present position and his future prospects. And, of course, the only solution was that Rosa would do well to marry Felipe.

So Tomaso withdrew to the outer side of the road and the shade of the fig-tree, while Felipe talked gaily with Rosa's mother, and Rosa looked on from the doorway with deep dark eyes that said nothing at all. For Felipe was wooing the daughter through the mother, as men have often done before him; and the widow smiled on Felipe's suit. The whole business, it appeared, was to be conducted in a sane and gentlemanly way, over a half of the widow's wine, with clinking glasses and a grave politeness. And, of course, Felipe had it all his own way. The question of rivalry did not so much as suggest itself to him, so he could the more easily be kind to the quiet man with the steady eyes who withdrew with such tact when he had finished his wine.

Of course, there was Tomaso's fortune to take into consideration. No one seemed to think of doubting that the prediction must eventually come true, but it was hardly likely to be verified in time to convert Tomaso into a serious rival to Felipe Fortis. There were assuredly no fortunes to be made out of the half-ruined mill. The trade

had left that for ever. There was no money in the whole valley, and Tomaso did not seem disposed to go and seek it elsewhere. He passed his time between the mill and the low wall opposite the Venta of the Break of Day, of which the stones beneath the fig-tree were polished with his constant use of them. He usually came down from the mill, which is a mile above the Venta, as anyone may prove who seeks the Valley of Repose to-day, by the new road recently cut on the hill-side by a spasmodically active Town Council—the road from Miramar to Palma.

It had been at one time supposed that Tomaso's fortune would come to him through this new road, for the construction of which a portion of the land attached to the mill must be purchased. But it was a very small portion, and the purchase-money a ridiculous little sum, which was immediately swallowed up in repairs to the creaking wheel. The road-makers, however, turned aside the stream below the mill, and conducted it to a chasm in the rock, where it fell a great height to a tunnel beneath the road. And half the valley said they could not sleep for the sound of it, and the other half said they liked it. And Rosa, whose bed-room window was nearer to it than any other in the valley, said nothing at all.

Sitting beneath the fig-tree, Tomaso looked up suddenly towards the mill. He was so much accustomed to the roar of his own mill-stream that his ears never heeded it, and heard through it softer and more distant sounds. He heard something now—the regular beat of trotting horses on the road far above his home. He looked up towards the heights, though, of course, he could see nothing through the pines, which are thickly planted here and almost as large as the pines of Vizzavona, in the island of Corsica. He listened to the sound with that quiet interest which comes to those who live in constant sunshine, and is in itself nearly akin to indifference.

"What is it?" asked the widow, noting his attitude.



His fortune had been predicted by a gipsy from Granada at the Trinity Fair on the little crowded market-place at Palma.

"It is a carriage on the new road—some traveller from Miramar."

Travellers from Miramar were few and far between. None had as yet made use of the new road. This was, therefore, a matter of considerable interest to the four persons idling away the afternoon at the Venta of the Break of Day.

"The horses will as likely as not take fright at the new waterfall made by these mules of road-makers," said Tomaso, rising slowly and throwing away the end of his cigarette. He took his stand in the middle of the road, looking up-hill with a gleam of interest in his eyes. He knew horses so well that his opinion arrested the attention of his hearers. Tomaso had always said that the diversion of his mill-stream would be dangerous to the traffic on the new road. But it was nobody's business to consult Tomaso.

He stood in the middle of the road, contemplatively biting his lower lip—a lean, lithe man, who had lived a clean and simple life—and never dreamt that this might be his fortune trotting down the new Miramar road towards him.

"Ah!" he exclaimed curtly.

The steady pace was suddenly broken, and at the same moment the hollow roar of the wheels told that the carriage was passing over the little tunnel through which the stream escaped to the valley below. Then came the clatter of frightened horses and the broken cry of one behind them. Felipe leapt to his feet and stood irresolute. The widow gave a little cry of fear, and Rosa came out into the sunlight. There the three stood, rigid, watching Tomaso contemplatively biting his lip in the middle of the sun-lit road.

In a moment the suspense was over—the worst was realised. A carriage swung round the corner a quarter of a mile higher up the road, with two horses stretched at a frantic gallop, and the driver had no reins in his hand. For his reins had broken, and the loose ends fluttered on either side. He was stooping forward, with his right hand at the screw-brake between his legs, and in his left hand he swung his heavy whip. He was a brave man, at all events, for he kept his nerve and tried to guide the horses with his whip.

There was just a bare chance that he might reach the Venta, but below it—not a hundred yards below it—the road turned sharply to the right, and everything failing to take that sharp turn would leap into space and the rocky bed of the river five hundred feet below.

The man gave a shout as he came round the corner, and to his credit it was always remembered that his gesture waved Tomaso aside. But Tomaso stood in the middle of the road, and his steady eyes suddenly blazed with a fierce excitement. His lips were apart. He was breathless, and Rosa found herself with her two hands at her throat watching him.

The carriage seemed to bear right down upon him, but he must have stepped aside, for it passed on and left the road clear. Tomaso was somewhere in the dust—in the confusion of tossing heads and flying reins. Then his white shirt appeared against the black of the horses' manes.

"Name of God," cried Felipe, "he is on top!"

And Felipe Fortis forgot his fine clothes and superior manners. He was out on the road in an instant, running as he never ran before, and shouting a hundred Catalan oaths which cannot be transcribed here, even in Catalan.

It was difficult to see what happened during these moments, which were just those instants of time in which one man does well and another badly. But Rosa and her mother saw at length that Tomaso was apparently half standing on the pole between the two horses. He was swinging and jerking from side to side, but all the while he was gathering the scattered reins in his hands. Then suddenly he threw himself back, and the horses' heads went up as if they were being strangled. They jerked and tugged in vain. Tomaso's arms were like steel. Already the

pace was slackening—the gallop was broken. And a minute later the carriage was at a standstill in the ditch.

Already the driver was on the ground explaining excitedly to Tomaso how it had happened, and Tomaso was smiling gravely as he wiped some blood from his hand. It was Felipe who, arriving at this moment, thought of opening the carriage-door. There was a pause while Felipe looked into the carriage, and Rosa and her mother ran towards him. Rosa helped Felipe to assist an old man to alight. He was a very fat man, with grey and flaccid cheeks, with shiny black hair and a good deal of gold chain and ring about him. He seemed only half-conscious of the assistance proffered to him, and walked slowly across the road to the shade of the trees. Here he sat down on the low wall with his elbows on his knees, his two hands to his head, and looked thoughtfully at the ground between his feet. It was precisely the attitude of one who has had a purler at football. And the others looked on in the waiting silence which usually characterises such moments.

"The gentleman is not hurt?" suggested Felipe, who was always affable and ready with his tongue.

But the gentleman was not prepared to confirm this optimistic view of the case. He simply sat staring at the ground between his feet. At

length he lifted his head and looked Felipe slowly up and down.

"Who stopped the horses?" he asked. "A man in a white shirt."

"It was Tomaso of the Mill," answered the widow, who would have spoken sooner if she had had her breath. "He washes his own," she added, anxious to say a good word for a neighbour.

Tomaso should, of course, have come forward and bowed. But Tomaso's manners were not of a showy description. He was helping the driver to repair the reins, and paused at this moment to remove the perspiration from his forehead with two fingers, which he subsequently wiped on the seam of his trousers.

"Hé!" cried the fat man sitting on the wall. One could see that he was a business man; for he had the curt manner of the counting-house.

"Hé, Tomaso!" added the widow Navario in a shrill voice. And Tomaso came slowly forward.



Tomaso of the Mill was watching with steady eyes.

"Your name?" said the man of business.

"Tomaso."

"Tomaso what?"

"Tomaso of the Mill," and his face fell a little when the fat man produced a pocket-book and wrote the name down with a shaking hand. The action rather savoured of the police and the law, and Tomaso did not like it.

The stout man leant forward with his chin in the palm of his hand and reflected for some moments. He was singularly reflective, and seemed to be making a mental calculation.

"See here," he said at length, looking at Tomaso with quick business-like

at Felipe, who, to do him justice, was smiling on the old man with much appreciation.

"You see what I am," continued the man of business, tapping his exuberant waistcoat; "I am fat and I am sixty-seven. When I return to Palma, I shall notify to a lawyer that I leave to you, 'Tomaso of the Mill,' ten thousand pesetas, to be paid as soon after my death as possible. At Barcelona I shall put the matter into legal form with my own notary there."

He rose from his seat on the wall and held out his thick white hand, which Tomaso took, and they shook hands gravely.

"As between gentlemen, eh?" said he; "as between gentlemen."



"You are therefore entitled to a commission on the profit that I shall make. It amounts to ten thousand pesetas—a modest fortune, eh?"

eyes. He was beginning to recover his colour now. "See here, I am not going to give you money—between gentlemen, eh! such things are not done. You have saved my life. Good! You are a brave man, and you risked your neck for a perfect stranger! I happen to be a rich man, and my life is of some value. I came from Barcelona to Majorca on business—business with a good profit. If I had gone over there"—he paused, and jerked his thumb towards the blue and hazy space that lay below them—"the transaction would have fallen through. You have enabled me, by your prompt action, to return to Palma this evening and sign the papers connected with this affair. Good! You are therefore entitled to a commission on the profit that I shall make. I have reckoned it out. It amounts to ten thousand pesetas—a modest fortune, eh?"

Tomaso nodded his head. He had always known that it would come. The widow Navarro threw up her eyes, and in a whisper called the attention of her own special black-letter saint to this business. Rosa was glancing surreptitiously

Then he walked slowly to the other side of the road, where the driver was engaged in drawing his carriage out of the ditch.

"I will enter your malediction of a carriage," he said, "but you must lead the horses to the bottom of the hill."

The carriage went slowly on its way, while the others, after watching it turn the corner, returned to the Venta. In the twinkling of an eye Tomaso's fortune had come. And he had won it with his own hands, precisely as the gipsy from Granada had predicted. The tale, moreover, is true, and anyone can verify it who will take the trouble to go to Palma de Mallorca, where half-a-dozen independent witnesses heard the prediction made at a stall in the crowded and narrow market-place nearly six months before the new Miramar road was completed.

As it was getting dusk, Felipe Fortis mounted his horse and rode on to his home in the valley far down the Valdemosa road. And Tomaso, with his handkerchief bound round his hand, walked thoughtfully up to his solitary home. The

great problem which he had thought out so carefully and brought to so grim and certain a conclusion had suddenly been reopened. And Rosa had noticed with the quickness of her sex that Tomaso had carefully avoided looking at her from the moment that his good fortune had been made known. His manner, as he bade mother and daughter a gruff good-night, was rather that of a malefactor than one who had just done a meritorious action, and Rosa watched him go with an odd little wise smile tilting the corners of her lips.

"Good-night," she said. "You—and your fortune."

And Tomaso turned the words over and over in his mind a hundred times, and could make nothing of them.

Rose was early astir the next morning, and happened to be at the open door when Tomaso came down the road. He was wearing his best hat—a flat-brimmed black felt—which, no doubt, the girl noticed, for it is by the piecing together of such trifles that women hold their own in this world. There was otherwise no change in Tomaso's habiliments, which consisted, as usual, of dark trousers, a white shirt, and a dark-blue faja or waistcloth.

"Where are you going?" cried Rosa, stepping out into the sunlight with a haste called forth, perhaps, by the suspicion that Tomaso would fain have passed by unnoticed. He stopped, his bronzed face a deeper red, his steady eyes wavering for once. But he did not come towards the Venta, which stands on the higher side of the road.

"I am going down to Palma—to make sure."

"Of your fortune?" inquired Rosa, looking at the cup she was drying with the air of superior knowledge which so completely puzzled the simple Tomaso.

"Yes," he answered, slowly turning on his heel as if to continue his journey.

"And then. . . ?" asked Rosa.

He looked up inquiringly.

"When you have made sure of your precious fortune?" she explained. She had raised her hand to her hair, and was standing in a very pretty, indifferent attitude. Tomaso held his lower lip between his teeth as he looked at her.

"I don't know what I shall do with it?" he answered, and turning, he walked hurriedly down the sunlit road.

"Come in on your way back and tell us about it," she called out after him, and then stood watching him until he turned the corner where he had picked up his fortune on the road the day before. It was characteristic of the man that he never turned to look at her, and the girl gave a little nod of the head as he disappeared. She had apparently expected him not to look back and yet wanted him to do it, and at the same time would rather he did not do it. Felipe Fortis would have turned half-a-dozen times, with a salutation and a wave of the hat.

But the sun went down behind the tableland of the Val d'Erraba, and Tomaso did not return. Then the moon rose, large and yellow, beyond the Valdemosa Heights, and the widow Navarro, her day's work done, walked slowly up the road to visit her sister, the road-keeper's wife. Rosa sat on the bench beneath the trellis, and thought those long thoughts that belong to youth. She heard Tomaso's step long before he came in sight, for the valley is thinly populated and as still as Sahara. He was walking slowly, and dragged his feet as if fatigued. The moon was now well up, and the girl could distinguish Tomaso's gleaming white shirt as he turned the corner. As he approached he kept on the left-hand side of the road. It was evident that he intended to call at the Venta.

"Hé—Tomaso!" cried Rosa, when he was almost at the steps.

"Hé—Rosa!" he answered

"I am all alone," said Rosa. "Mother has gone to see Aunt Luisa. Have you your fortune in your pocket?"

He came up the steps and leant against the trellis, looking down at her. She could not see his face, but a woman does not always need to do that.

"What is it—Tomaso?" she asked gravely.

"That poor man," he explained simply—for the Spaniards hold human life but cheaply—"was found dead in his carriage when they reached Palma. The doctors say it was the shock—and he so fat. At all events he is dead."

Rosa crossed herself mechanically, and devoutly thought first of all of the merchant's future state.

"His last action was a good one," she said. "There is that to remember."

"Yes," said Tomaso in a queer voice. And at the sound Rosa looked up at him sharply, but she could see nothing, for his face was in the shadow.

"And as for you," she said tentatively, "you will get your fortune all the sooner."

"I shall never get it at all," answered Tomaso, with a curt laugh. "I went down to Palma this morning with my head full of plans—in the sunshine. I come back with an empty brain—in the dark."

He stood motionless, looking down at her. They are slow of tongue in Majorca, and Rosa reflected for quite a minute before she spoke—which is saying a good deal for a woman.

"Tell me," she said at length gently, "why is it that you will not get your fortune?"

"I went to the notary and told him what had happened, what the merchant had said and who had heard him—and the notary laughed. 'Where is your paper?' he asked; and, of course, I had no paper. I went to another notary, and at last I saw the Alcalde. 'You should have asked for a paper properly signed,' he said. But no gentleman could have asked for that."

"No," replied Rosa, rather doubtfully.

"I found the driver of the carriage," continued Tomaso, "and took him to the Alcalde, but that was no better. The Alcalde and the notaries laughed at us. Such a story, they said, would make any lawyer laugh."

"But there is Felipe Fortis, who heard it too."

"Yes," answered Tomaso in a hollow voice, "there is Felipe Fortis. He was in Palma, and I found him at the café. But he said he had not time to come to the Alcalde with me then, and he was sure that if he did it would be useless."

"Ah!" said Rosa. She got up and walked to the edge of the terrace, looking down into the moonlit valley in silence for some minutes. Then she came slowly back, and stood before him looking up into his face. He was head and shoulders above her.

"So your fortune is gone," she said. And the moonlight shining

on her face betrayed the presence of that fleeting wise smile which Tomaso had noticed more than once with wonder.

"Yes—it is gone. And there is an end of it."

"Of what?" asked Rosa.

"Oh!—of everything," replied Tomaso, with a grim stoicism.

Rosa stood looking at him for a moment. Then she took two deliberate steps forward and leant against him just as he was leaning against the trellis, as if he had been a tree or something solid and reliable of that sort. She laid her cheek, of a deeper colour than a sunburnt peach, against his white shirt. In a sort of parenthesis of thought she took a sudden, half-maternal interest in the middle button of his shirt, tested it, and found it more firmly fixed than she had supposed. Her dusky hair just brushed his chin.

"Then you are nothing but a stupid," she said.



She laid her cheek, of a deeper colour than a sunburnt peach, against his white shirt.



THE TOURNAMENT: A NEW GAME FOR CHRISTMAS.

ILLUSTRATED BY
GUNNING KING.

WITH COMPOUND INTEREST BY IAN MACLAREN

"YES, Sir," said my friend Zachariah P. Diggs, "I have had a 'down' on five men, for value received, and I have settled with four and taken a receipt. None of them hankered to do business with me again, and two of them retired into private life; the fifth account is still open, and there has been some delay in balancing it, but it is going to be settled, you bet, with full interest."

"It's thirty years last fall since he played it very low down on my mother, and made her cry in her own house; he scooted immediately, and hid his track. Being only a boy then, I couldn't face up to him, and afterwards I'd other things to think of, but I took a good look at him, and I put a notch in my memory. I am on his trail all the time, and some day I'll come up with him, you may lay your bottom dollar on that."

"I was thirteen, and he might be twenty, and I reckon we've both developed some, but there are two things that don't change: the eye and the voice. I saw how he looked that day, and I heard what he said, and I would pick him out from a million."

"He is just the man to swear that it was another fellow, and that he never did such a thing: he's that kind of cuss, but he'll not escape, and don't you think so. No; he'll have to climb down some day soon and take it sitting. Golly!" And Zachariah P. Diggs lost the very power of speech as he imagined the recompense lying in wait for this guilty man.

"No, I don't mind telling you what the varmint did, for it sorter keeps the fire burning, though, for that matter; when you open a gas-well in a man's memory you don't need to be using bellows: it goes without blast, and don't run out."

"We had gone West, and were settled on the Indian border. Yes, Sir, I used to see the red-skins coming and going to the nearest store, trading skins for whisky; and it wasn't a pretty sight. They never did us any harm, but five years afterwards they scalped every man, woman, and child in the district. Injins are worse than yellow dogs. I never seen but one good Injin, and he was dead."

"When I saw that clearing of ours last year, five blocks of offices stood on it, besides a Court of Justice. The city round it grow'd so fast that they require to take a new census every week to keep up with the population, and it's so enterprising that an alderman can get enough boodle from a trolley-car contract in five years to retire from commercial business and go into Congress. That clearing would have been a gold-mine neat, without sluicing, if we had hung on to it, but we let it go for a hundred dollars after father died. Property don't boom when the children of the forest are hovering round, not much!"

"Father was not a born hustler, else he hadn't ended in a Western clearing, but he had plenty of sand in him, and did his turn like an able-bodied man. He was brought up on the Old Testament without mixture, and there was one text he fairly froze to—'Spare the rod and spoil the child.' He didn't, you bet! and it may be a sort of weakness in human nature, but we drew to mother."

"Mothers," and Zachariah began to moralise, "are just the biggest invention ever seen on the face of the earth, or ever will be, till the whole business is wound up. When the Almighty made the first mother, He rested and felt good, for He knew that He could never pass that. And He never has."

"I've known a pretty considerable assortment of toughs in my time, and some of them on the Mississippi were daisies, who went always heeled, and shot on sight, but I never knew one that hadn't a soft place in his heart for his mother, and I saw a hole drilled in a man once cos he spoke nasty when a fellow was telling about the days when he was a kid with his mother. And I've seen two or three first-rate mothers myself, but none in the same grade with my own. She had the biggest fight ever a woman had, and she never grumbled, not once. She just smiled straight through, and she prayed. My gracious! she knew how to bake, and she knew how to pray. Asked what she wanted just confidential-like, and got it without mistake. She saved us from starving, and prayed in a complete meal with fixings, as sure as my name is Zach Diggs. But that don't let off the fellow that made her cry. He's got to pay his own debt and is going to."

"Father had been dead a month, and the snow was deep upon the ground. There never was very much in the house, and the last of it was eaten up by the children. The bill of fare for two days had been water and a chunk of bread, and if we had plenty chunks we shouldn't have asked for oysters and ice-cream, for we had uncommon good appetites, and could have eaten an Injin's mocassins if we could have got hold of them. There was no Injin nor any other body came near us, and the kids began to cry—they're apt to lose heart and weaken, kids are, when they've nothing to eat and very little fire to keep them warm, for our wood pile was nearly gone."

"The sight of mother's face broke me up, and I went out into the wood, but I heard mother pray as I stood outside the door. My mind don't seem to run much to sermons, but it's kept that prayer safe since that day—"

"O God! Thou art our Father in Heaven, and I am a poor mother in the backwoods. Thou didst take away my husband and the father of this family, and we have no one to protect and help us. It is winter time, and we are cold and starving, and the neighbours are far away. We have no friends but Thee, and we ask Thee to send us food this very day, for Thy love's sake and for the children's sake. Amen."

"Never heard a parson speak to God like that in a church, and if I did, you bet, I'd be there; but I didn't reckon mother would get answer that time. The next house was two miles off, and I calculate they had enough to do with themselves. It wasn't likely that there would be many people fooling round the woods that afternoon, for they weren't just what you would call a pleasure park."

"I felt twenty years old in my mind, for being a widow's eldest son puts on a few years, but in my body I was just thirteen; and though a frontier lad counts some more for his age than a lad in the settlements, he can't start a victual store just where he pleases, or order a dinner for his mother and family. I wandered through the wood pretty low down, not that I cared a continental about myself, though I guess I could have taken a pumpkin pie without pressing. It was the mother and the kids that got me, and I don't mind saying that I fetched up against a tree and began to cry."

"What's wrang wi' ye, ma wee mannie," and I turned round pretty slick, for I reckoned I was the only human in those woods that day. But no man can

calculate the population and bring out the figures right unless he takes in a Scotsman. No, Sir, I've never yet been in the place, and I've never heard of it, and I don't believe it exists, where you won't find a Scotsman. They say there ain't many of them altogether, but they're better spread and they're further forward than any other nation. They've marked out more claims in this world than the Jews themselves, and I'll take my affidavit that they'll make a fair start in the world to come.

"This Scot had come out from the settlements six months before, and reckoned he'd start a school, for there's nothing a Scot can't do from lumbering to Latin; but Stockton didn't encourage a high-class academy. A Scot is never content to be in the procession, he must always travel in the band wagon; but Mr. MacPhun was too previous by ten years, and the Injins were not patrons of learning.

"He was great, was Angus MacPhun, and knew what was due to his profession. He got a log shanty that belonged to Injin Bill, who had the worst of an argument with a dozen red-skins, and didn't seem to take any more interest in Stockton. MacPhun cleared out the shanty and made it into a school-house, and he put up a board outside with this notice—

STOCKTON ACADEMY.

ANGUS MACPHUN, M.A.,
RECTOR.

JUNIOR DEPARTMENT.
ENGLISH, WRITING, ARITHMETIC,
AND GEOGRAPHY.

SENIOR DEPARTMENT.
LATIN, GREEK, MATHEMATICS,
AND DRAWING.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR
MUSIC AND HORTICULTURE.

TERMS ON APPLICATION TO THE
HEAD MASTER.

THE ACADEMY OPENS ON OCT. 1.

"There was nothing mean about Angus MacPhun; he wouldn't work with a second-rate show. 'Junior and Senior Departments. Music and Horticulture.' Golly! he took the cake, did Angus.

"Angus warn't over oppressed with pupils that winter. I heard tell he once had three; juniors, I reckon, but most days he had none. On that afternoon he was busy in the woods, with horticulture I guess; so he found my trail and lighted on me when this child was dead beat.

"Wot I said to him I don't jist remember, but I guess mother was in it and kids and some foolery about having no breakfast. Fact is, you don't need to orate to a Scot, for he sizes you up without speaking. A Scot ain't given to spreading himself, he prefers doing something. There's less gas," summed up Mr. Diggs, "and more go in a Scot than in three Americans.

"Come awa wi' me this verra meenut," said Angus, and he headed off for the village. A man had come from the East and started a store, and when we got to the door the darned place was closed, but Angus tracked the man to where he was lodging and roused him out of bed.

"Isn't it mighty to see ye sleepin' and snorin' in the middle o' the day when customers are fechtin' to get into yir store? Div ye no ken that for a public store to be locked at this hour is contrary to the law of every ceevilised nation? I havena the book by me, but I'm thinkin' there'll be something about this in the Constitution o' the United States. Man, I wud'na say but that yir conduct might be a misdemeanour."

"If an American had played it like that on Ike Stokes, Ike would have been apt to tell him where to go to, but he jist rose and followed that Scot like a lamb.

"Twenty pund o' flour," said Angus, "to begin wi'. Five pund o' bacon. Don't ye think," said Zachariah, "that I forget that order. I see that white flour

coming out of the sack just plain to-day. 'Six pund o' coffee,' went on Angus, 'and six pund o' sugar, and three pund o' cheese, and let's see yir butter.' There was nothing mean in Angus MacPhun, Head Master of Stockton Academy. We were jist leaving when Angus stopped. 'Lord sake!' he said, 'if I didna near forget one jar of molasses and some candy for the bairns!' That's what he said, and if you hear any man say that a Scot has no heart, then you chip in and tell him he's a liar, and send the account to Zachariah P. Diggs.

"He hoisted the bag of flour on his shoulder, and took the bacon in one hand and the butter in the other, and the rest was tied in a bag—that was my share to carry. Will you believe it I had never said one word in the store; tried to, but didn't seem to get the right word, and felt kinder choky at the throat; but you bet I was thinkin', doing jist the biggest bit o' thinkin' up to date since I'd started on life.

"Mother gave me all the religion I ever got, and she told us that when God took a notion o' helping a man He sent an angel, and that the angels were very

beautiful, jist like women, and had wings. Wall, I took a good look at Angus MacPhun, and on first sight he didn't seem to correspond with the invoice, for if ever there was a raw-boned Scot it was Angus; but I remembered what mother asked in her prayer, and when I saw Angus collecting the food in Ike's store I was quite satisfied with the angel. Taking him all in all, he was jist about the best angel I have come across.

"He went first through the woods and I followed; for though I was mighty proud there wasn't much grit left in me, for I'd had nothing to eat since yesterday's breakfast, and a growing lad of thirteen needs a good deal of coal in his furnaces. It went agin my heart, but I fell behind, and Angus missed me, and back he came. 'My legs are ower lang, and I was thinkin' ower fast, and yir nae sae big as yir goin' to be; this coat is ower heavy for me, and these proveesions are ower heavy for you; we'll have an exchange.' And as I'm a white man, if that fool didn't take off his coat and wrap it round me, settin' up to be my mother, and then he took the fixin's on his back with the flour, and I'm darned if he didn't whistle 'Scots wha' hae' till the procession came along quick-step to our shanty.

"They were all gathered inside, 'cos kids feel the cold when they've had no

breakfast. When we stood at the door, I heard mother say to them, 'Don't cry; we'll all sit together in the corner to keep warm, and I've asked God to send us something to eat,' 'Think He'll do it?' said Jim. 'God never broke His word,' I heard mother saying. 'Laddie,' said Angus, 'ye have a gude mother; see that ye be a gude son.' And I'm not prepared to take my oath in a court of justice that I promised. Didn't seem to mind the word, but I didn't forget; don't you suppose I do.

"It's terrible cold weather, Mem,' said Angus, for all the world as if he had jist kinder dropped in for a call. 'And if it holds on like this, I weedna say but it might come to a storm.'

"Mother was standing and looking at him while he laid on the empty table the flour and the bacon and the coffee, and the butter and the cheese, and the sugar and the molasses, and the candy. That's the auctioneer's catalogue, nothing missing, and the value I figure up at twenty-two thousand two hundred and fifty dollars, leaving out cents.

"It's jist came into my mind, Mem, that ye might have some inconvenience



"What's wrong wi' ye, na wee mannie?"

in gettin' yir groceries, and as I happened to have naethin' to do this afternoon, as the Latin and Greek classes werena meetin', I took the liberty of makin' a trifling selection and bringin' them along.'

"Mother was a lady by creation. God made her that way, and I have never yet lighted on a woman that could speak prettier than mother, though she lived in the backwoods, and never had a silk dress till I struck oil for the first time. But mother had not one word to say that day: she just took one look at the kids and another at the table, and she burst into tears. Mother was a brave woman, and if a wild cat had come into the shanty she would have fought for her children, but the sight of that square meal just broke her up.

"It was downright mean, for between mother crying and the things on the table we were so taken up that we forgot Angus, and when mother came to herself again he was gone, and from that day to this I've never caught sight of Angus MacPhun.

"Don't you run after him,' mother said, 'for you ain't fit. After we've had dinner you and I will go to the village and thank him.' Golly! what a dinner that was! I've paid the top price at Delmonico's and the show places in Paris, but I never tasted anything so sweet as that meal mother cooked with Angus MacPhun's materials. Tell you straight, the smell of that bacon frizzling on the fire—well, I can feel it jist now, and it's good. Guess that meal lasted an hour, and we did feel happy in our clothes when it was over. Then the snow came on again, and it was five days before we could go to the village. When mother and I got there we found that we had missed the connection. The Rector of Stockton Academy had resigned his lucrative position and left two days before, and he told nobody where he was going. A Scot don't find it easy to tell anything, just as other men don't find it easy to keep anything. Mother went to the store, and found what Angus had paid for the stock-in-trade that he started our shanty with, and she never was happy till she had saved that money and put it in a bag for Angus. 'We'll find him some day,' she said, 'and then we'll give him the bag, but we can never pay the debt.'

She had a name for him, and used to call him 'the Good Samaritan.' Got it out of the Bible, you know; and when she was a-dying she said to me, 'Zach, don't forget your mother, and do what's right, and be sure that you find "the Good Samaritan," give him that bag, and tell him he has got the blessing of the widow and the fatherless.' I've had a lot of jobs to do since that day, but I've always kept an open eye for the trail of 'the Good Samaritan.' I've tracked him through the States and back to England, and I've found Angus MacPhun.

"Yes, Sir, this child has been on the Mississippi, and that ain't fool's play; and he's fought with grizzlies and with red-skins, he's fought through the war, and he's lived with the Mormons, and he wasn't going to be beat by a long-legged Scot. Say, will you come down to-morrow—day before Christmas, you know—and see me settle accounts with 'the Good Samaritan'? Want a witness, you know, to make it a legal transaction. Might escape again if there was nobody to hang on to him."

It was clear frosty weather as we raced through the home counties in the Manchester express, and Zachariah was in immense spirits, so that the journey was a perpetual succession of incidents. He was vastly pleased to find himself in

a corridor train, through the length and breadth of which he roamed with pleasure, declaring, however, that no civilised people would long remain in this stage of arrested development, and prophesying that he would live to see Pullman expresses running from London to John-o'-Groat's, with drawing-room and sleepers and dining-car and observation-car and a barber. "This is a big old country," said Mr. Diggs, "and if it wakens up it will give us points. When Great Britain and Ireland has a mind to, it will lead the procession." Twice during the forenoon Mr. Diggs took a substantial luncheon in the dining-car, and at other times he sustained himself with liquid refreshment, for he had a big job before him. "It ain't every day," he said, "that Zachariah P. D. has a cash transaction with a 'Good Samaritan.'" He informed the only other passenger in our compartment that he was going to pay back old scores to a man that had played a trick on him in his youth; and when he slapped his trouser pocket the respectable British citizen looked anxious, for he was certain that Mr. Diggs was referring to a revolver. He called in at other

compartments, to the amazement of their occupants, and explained to them the comparative merits of English and American institutions. Once he made his way to the brake-van and poured contempt on the luggage system of the United Kingdom, but presented the guard with a substantial token of personal regard. At Manchester he selected a hansom with considerable care, explaining that he must go by express to 207, Upper Huddart Street, and that if the driver would give us a real razzle-dazzle he would remember him handsomely in his will. It was a change from the country to the atmosphere of Manchester, which you could have cut with a knife, and Mr. Diggs was disrespectful to the enterprise of that great commercial centre. "That canal was pretty good biz, though they needn't spread themselves about it so much. Why don't they clean up their air? Now a live community would start a company and lay on decent air at so much a cubic foot. Bet there's a dozen men in the States could work it out, and I wouldn't mind going on the syndicate. Skip along, driver, to 207, Upper Huddart Street. 'Spect we must be in Lower Huddart Street from the feel of the atmosphere."



She just took one look at the kids, and another at the table, and she burst into tears.

The hansom could hardly contain Zachariah as we came near the number, and I gathered that he would give a good deal if Mr. MacPhun's present school impressed the imagination at first sight. No. 207 was a shabby house of considerable age and in extremely bad repair, in which a well-to-do man had lived long ago at the rent of a hundred a year, but which was now likely let for thirty-five pounds. Respectable poverty looked at you from the scrap of flowerless garden and the uncurtained windows, and the shabby door and the broken gate, but Diggs saw none of these things for the glory of the board with its fresh paint, and impressive lettering of red upon a black ground, and the programme of the "Upper Huddart High School for Boys."

"Same old man," said Mr. Diggs, "but he's been growing these thirty years, has Angus; he ain't an old Sardine," and Mr. Diggs pointed in triumph to new titles: "'LL.B.,' that's pretty good; 'LL.D.,' that takes the bakery; 'M.A.' ain't in the race now with 'assistant-masters.' And see that!"—Mr. Diggs was almost speechless with admiration—"Sanskrit, Hindostanee, and other Eastern languages"—how is that for high?—there's no flies on Angus MacPhun, and that was the man who carried a bag of flour with bacon and other fixings to our shanty. 'Sanskrit, Hindostanee, and other Eastern languages.' My gracious!

ain't he a big bug?" And Mr. Diggs went up to the door with immense satisfaction.

It was to me, who knew the inwardness of the sight, a very pathetic figure which opened the door and said something about the servant being out. Oh! the lies that Scots will tell to hide their poverty! With clothes worn to the bone, but scrupulously clean, with a careworn face that told of long hours and hard study, and the look of a man that was half starved—the whole tragedy of a poor venture school was in that figure; but the man was a scholar and a gentleman of his kind, from the grey hair to his patched boots. When I saw that man I could have wept. Long years of high-class, low-paid drudgery, but Zachariah saw nothing but glory. Mr. MacPhun, to his eyes, was clothed in Degrees as in a purple and gold garment. A halo of learning was round his head, and I never heard Zachariah speak with such respect to any living man, as when he addressed the Head Master of Upper Huddart High School. He was careful to call him Doctor every second sentence; he apologised for an unlearned man intruding upon a scholar. When MacPhun took us into a room which had no carpet and no furniture save a couple of desks and a few mats, and bade us be seated with a certain grave dignity, Zachariah was plainly abashed and knew not how to proceed—for all his boasting, how he would reduce MacPhun to confusion and take his revenge upon him when at last they met face to face.

"Doctor MacPhun," began Zachariah, "unless I've made the biggest mistake of my life you once lived at Stockton, Minnesota, United States. Yes, and you were Rector of Stockton Academy just thirty years ago this Christmas; you ain't prepared to deny that on Bible oath. And, Doctor MacPhun, you are the man that carried twenty pound of flour, besides fixin's, from the store at Stockton, Minnesota, United States, to a widow's house three miles off in the woods, same postal address, one afternoon thirty years ago." This MacPhun did not seem to remember, and at that moment the bell rang, and murmuring something again about the absent servant, he went to open the door. His wife came in with some poor provision for their Christmas dinner, and as she went along the lobby we caught a glimpse of one who had been a faithful and sympathetic helper in the lonely struggle which a few have fought for learning and for life. MacPhun went to relieve his wife of the parcel before she went upstairs, and Zachariah could hardly maintain his composure. "Their dinner, I'll lay a thousand dollars, and not too much of it; but see, didn't he help her just as he did me? He's a perfect gentleman is Angus MacPhun, LL.D., but he don't remember about the flour, nary a bit, though it cost him eleven dollars twenty-five cents, and I reckon he hadn't eleven more. Why, he did such things regular and never thought about them. 'Hindostance and other Eastern languages, M.A., LL.D.' Ain't he a four-horse team complete and a yellow dog underneath?"

"I've been searching my memory," said MacPhun, returning in a minute or two, "and I'm judging that you are correct in your allusion to a circumstance which took place during my residence at Stockton. There was a boy helped me to carry the provisions."

"There was," said Mr. Diggs in huge delight, "and that boy stands six feet two in his stockings, and runs to forty-two inches round his chest, and he's seen two or three things since that day, and he hasn't forgot you, and—and—wall, he's jist come to settle the bill for that flour right here." And Zachariah laid his mother's bag upon the desk and began to pick out the money, whose largest denomination was half a dollar, but which was mainly made up of five-cent pieces. A poor woman's careful savings.

"Toots, man," and MacPhun waved his hand in deprecation. "I had

forgotten the circumstance, and ye owe me naething, it was jist a neeburly act, and no worth mentioning. Besides," said MacPhun, "it's mair than three year ago, and the claim is barred by the Statute of Leemitation."

"Doctor, you're a mighty clever man, and I guess there ain't another in this city knows his way as well about Eastern tongues as you, but you've missed it this time; yes, Sir, when you speak about your old Statute of Limitation you are barking up the wrong tree. I don't give a continental for your statutes; I jist know one statute, and that was passed by mother: she told me to find you out, and pay that debt. And I've found you, though it's been a pretty long trail, and here is the dust same as my mother saved it, and left it with me. There were her prayers for you, too, and they'll be attended to in the right quarter—her prayers were never returned, you be sure. And there's a matter of interest which I've worked out, and I'll submit the accounts, Doctor, this evening after dinner, at the hotel."

There were just the four of us, and the honours lay between the Head Master of Upper Huddart High School and Zachariah P. Diggs. The humours were different, but in alternate courses they were both irresistible, and the dry chuckle with which MacPhun honoured one of Diggs's most outrageous adventures was only equalled by the howl, sudden and solitary, with which Zachariah received a story of the North. Towards the close of the evening Zachariah regained his solemnity, and proceeded to business. "When a man does a favour to another he may take it as a certainty he'll be asked to do another, for that's the way human nature is made. You went and helped my mother, Doctor, when she was in a big trouble, and you made tracks, and you thought you had escaped. But you hadn't. You can speak Sanscrit, but you couldn't hide yourself always from that mother's son. Now you can't do any more kindness to that mother, because she has gone home; but you've got to do a favour for her son, and if you're the man I take you to be you'll not say no."

"When my pards and I struck oil last time it was a big streak of luck, and we piled it up considerable. We had had our haul before, and lost the dust lots of ways; now we calculated we should bank some of it where it would bring interest and be safe. We've started a college in Stockton, and it's a pretty nice concern, and it just wants one thing to make it hum—that is a live President. The other men we've got, and I'm over here prospecting for the President, and seeking for the man my mother wanted paid. And, Doctor MacPhun, I've found them both in the same man."

"The conditions are these, and they are: First, that you close your present emporium of learning without delay;

second, that Mistress MacPhun and you pack your trunks, and take a run with me to the Mediterranean, where the sun knows how to shine and the sea does pretty well in blue; and that you become President of Stockton College, with a salary to begin with of six thousand dollars and a corresponding place of residence. Mr. President and Mistress President, I drink your good health, and I wish you many years of health and prosperity. I guess the cigars have been overdue for the last thirty minutes, and if Mistress President don't object on grounds of conscience, we'll just light up. Land of liberty, this is the tallest night that Z. P. D. has had since he started out."

"Mother's been waiting for this some time," said Zachariah, after the MacPhuns had departed for Upper Huddart Street in a carriage-and-pair, beyond the power of speech. "She maybe judged that I had been slouching in the business, but she's satisfied now, for the debt is paid with interest. I declare if it ain't twelve o'clock! Here's a merry Christmas to you!"



"It was jist a neeburly act, and no worth mentioning."



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Vistas of sport and play.
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Whose name is—but Time will tell.



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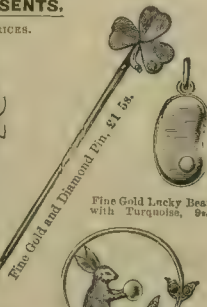


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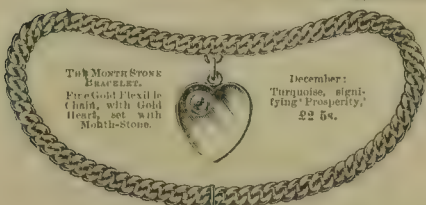


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PEGGY TOMLINSON

By
BARRY PAIN

ILLUSTRATED BY RAYMOND POTTER.

PEGGY TOMLINSON, aged twelve, had been detected in the act of eating chocolate during the Litany. Further, she had coasted down Sale's Hill on her bicycle—a feat that had been expressly forbidden. Also, she was unable to repeat the list of the kings of Judah and Israel. Likewise, she had instructed Berthe, the French parlour-maid, a stranger to the country and the language, always to address Aunt Agnes as “Your Holiness”; and the unsuspecting Berthe, only anxious to be correct, had done so. In addition, there were many other offences. Had she not been late for breakfast three consecutive mornings, upset the ink, taken the dog out without his muzzle, been impertinent to the Rev. Charles Cheap, and sent little Billy Sprigg into the village with a bottle under his arm to buy half a pint of the best pigeon's milk?

In fact, Peggy Tomlinson's sins were many and a source of grave distress to Aunt Agnes and Aunt Annabel. Of the two aunts Agnes was the elder, the more massive, the more experienced, with greater wealth and a finer sense of duty. Since the death of her husband, eight years before, she had had her sister Annabel to live with her and keep her company. Annabel was not dominant by nature, and stepped easily into the second place; she had never been married, and a brief engagement in her youth had long since been forgotten by everybody, including herself. In face Agnes was a little like Napoleon; and Annabel, with her round spectacles on, was a little like a bird. They got on very well together. There had been a difference, when Annabel had wished to go out as a missionary, but Agnes had triumphed and shown her sister where her duty really lay. There were occasional differences now as to the correct management of their orphan niece, Peggy, of whom for the last four years they had had the charge. Agnes thought Annabel a little inclined to weakness. You could see the same weakness in Annabel's play at Patience, at which Agnes was masterly. Annabel had been known to reverse, illegally, the position of two cards which were giving her trouble; it had given rise to some discussion. But on the whole, it was a very happy household, and remarkably peaceful but for the enlivenment which Peggy gave it.

“Something decisive must be done,” said Aunt Agnes firmly, “and I shall do it. At the very next offence I shall give her a severe punishment, and one which she will remember.”

“She has been very troublesome of late,” replied Aunt Annabel, “but I don't think she means any harm. There is that to be considered.”

“My dear Annabel, if she rides her bicycle down Sale's Hill—particularly with her feet off the—er—treadles—she will most certainly kill herself one of these days, whether she means any harm or not. Mr. Cheap told me himself that, though he would enjoy it, he would never consider himself justified in riding down a hill like that.”

“Peggy rides beautifully—she got two first prizes at the Gymkhana, you know.

She seems to think that Mr. Cheap is a little nervous.” Peggy herself, by the way, had put it rather more strongly than that.

“Perhaps you have also some defence for her gross impertinence to Mr. Cheap—impertinence so bad that he felt compelled to report it to us?”

“Oh, no! I spoke to her about it myself. The trouble is that she seems almost to dislike Mr. Cheap.”

“Dislike the curate of the parish! What right has a little girl to take such a liberty? Really, Annabel, you are weak. You are far too weak.”

“I fear so,” said Annabel.

Certainly Peggy had behaved badly. The Reverend Charles Cheap was not, perhaps, the finest specimen of muscular Christianity. He could just ride a bicycle, and he rode after his own manner. He had, in surmounting a slight incline, a curious, jerky, pump-handle action of the body, which amused Peggy but did not justify her in her impertinence. She had followed him up a hill imitating his action, with some talent for mimicry and no reverence. Unfortunately a dog barked, and the Reverend Charles Cheap—he was even more than nervous—circled into the middle of the road, got entangled with himself, and fell off. In the moment of falling-off he realised that he was being caricatured from behind, and lost his temper.

There had been a day when Peggy had found him stranded five miles from anywhere, and had mended the puncture for him. She it was who had shown him, to his surprise, that there was more than one point at which a bicycle needs lubrication. She it was who, when he was on the verge of returning the machine to the makers with an indignant and very sarcastic letter on the inferiority of the goods they supplied, showed him that the only thing wrong with the machine was that the chain needed to be tightened, and tightened it for him. All these services were now forgotten. The Reverend Charles Cheap had been touched on his dignity. And he posted a letter of six pages to Aunt Agnes, setting forth this grievous sin on the part of Peggy and every other sin, grievous or not, which he had ever been able to observe in her, and saying that he was only actuated by a sense of duty. Personally, the little incident had amused him. Had he not whipped round smartly as soon as he suspected something of the kind, he might not have detected the impertinence at all. So Peggy had received thirty minutes of Aunt Agnes at her very best, followed by fifteen minutes of Aunt Annabel at her very weakest, and the two aunts, in solemn conference, had decided that at the very next offence the punishment must be signal and Titanic.

In addition to distressing others, Peggy Tomlinson had also profoundly distressed herself, being, like most high-spirited girls, possessed of a good deal of affection and nice feeling. So this Saturday afternoon she sat up in the school-room alone, and wondered if some special kind of curse was on her, and whether she would ultimately come to a bad end in a low-class prison. Many adults in authority take a great deal of trouble to make children have this view of themselves, and the worst of it is that they sometimes succeed.

Peggy had a mane of red hair, and was going to be a beauty. She was aware of the first because William Sprigg, Esq., aged eight, occasionally (when he had

a clear run before him) called her "Ginger." Of the beauty she was not aware, and if she had been offered her choice between beauty and a stick of chocolate, she would have taken the chocolate without hesitation. Peggy had a perfect skin, big grey eyes, regular features, and the sweetest expression in the world. It is not every day that Nature makes a red-haired beauty, but when she does she does well.

It had been Peggy's original intention (as there were no lessons on Saturday afternoon) to remain at home and read somewhat ostentatiously, in the presence of her aunts, those books which she generally reserved for Sunday. But, as it happened, this Saturday afternoon was gloriously fine, a fine afternoon after many days of rain, which had flooded the brook through the fields. On reflection, she decided upon a compromise. She would go out, but she would not take her bicycle. You cannot coast down Sale's Hill when you have no bicycle. She went out alone and discreet, but she thought that possibly Billy Sprigg might be somewhere about. She went down to the bridge over the brook, and for awhile amused herself at the game of Oxford and Cambridge. You take two pieces of stick of the same length, but distinguishable by their markings, and decide that one of them is Oxford and the other Cambridge. You fling them into the water on one side of the bridge, giving them conscientiously an even start. You then run to the other side of the bridge, and look to see which will come out first. This afternoon Oxford had won for the unprecedented number of twenty-three times in succession. She had just started the twenty-fourth race, and rushed to the other side of the bridge, when a loud call from behind announced the presence of Billy Sprigg. In a moment later from under the bridge, struggling ineffectively in the strong current, came

the fat pug dog which was the property and special joy of Mrs. Sprigg. Peggy realised that Billy had once more made a fool of himself. She also realised that unless something was done that pug's last hour had come. Then she ran down the bank until she had got ahead of the dog, and went in in her clothes.

She was wringing the water as well as she could from her skirts and her red hair when Billy Sprigg came up to her, panting, and too frightened to laugh.

"You've pretty nearly done it this time, Billy," she observed; "what on earth were you up to?"

"Well, I knew that all dogs could swim, so I told Peter to go in, and he wouldn't go in, so I picked him up and pushed him in. And then the stream was too strong for him. It's awfully lucky that you were there."

"Lucky for you," said Peggy grimly. "Probably I shall catch cold and die of consumption. I don't expect anything else."

"Are you going to say anything about it?" asked Billy.

"Why?"

"Because there'll be an awful row at home if they know I threw Peter in. I wouldn't mind saying that he walked on the edge of the bridge and got dizzy

and tumbled in, but they wouldn't believe it. They don't often believe me even when I am telling the truth. I shall be in an awful row if you let on."

"And I shall be in an awful row if I don't," said Peggy.

"Well," said Billy, whose chivalry was still in an elementary condition, "you've got me into rows enough before this."

"That's true," said Peggy meditatively; "all right. I'll get you out of this one. Run the dog about in the sun till he's dry. I must scoot home pretty sharp and get changed."

"I say, you are a brick!"

"And I say you're an idiot. See you to-morrow if I'm not dead."

So Peggy went home and suffered severe cross-examination and baffled it. Her two aunts were in a difficult position. Her refusal to give any information

made it probable that she had gone into the river from sheer iniquity. And for this reason it was necessary to treat her with the utmost severity. At the same time she might, they feared, become very ill in consequence of her immersion on a cold day at the end of November, and for that reason it was necessary to treat her with the utmost gentleness. As usual, Aunt Agnes inclined to the severity and Aunt Annabel to the gentleness. The latter, in romantic desperation, asked Peggy if she had gone in to save the life of a child.

"No," said Peggy bluntly, "I didn't."

The Bench then decided to pronounce sentence on the following morning, and the guilty prisoner was left in bed with a hot-water bottle and an unpleasant subject for meditation.

"Never," said Aunt Agnes firmly, "did I know anything so mysterious, and where there is mystery there is always something wrong."

"You don't think," suggested Aunt Annabel, "that it would be any good if I went up and tried to persuade her to tell us?"

"That," said Aunt Agnes drily, "is what you have been doing for the last half-hour."

"What I had thought," said Aunt Annabel hesitatingly, "was that perhaps one might promise her something if—"

"I am surprised at you," said Aunt Agnes severely. "There is a point at which weakness becomes something worse than weakness. One does not offer a child bribes to do what she is told."

The game of Patience that evening was a melancholy affair. Aunt Agnes extricated herself from tremendous difficulties by magnificent generalship, and yet hardly boasted about it at all. Annabel, favoured by fortune, succeeded in playing out three successive sets, and yet found no satisfaction therein. After the Patience the Bench consulted again, while upstairs the prisoner slept sweetly.



"Run the dog about in the sun until he's dry."



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The prisoner was down in time for breakfast on the following morning, and ate, as culprits so often will eat on the day of their execution, a capital breakfast. And then the sentence was pronounced. This year Peggy Tomlinson was to receive no Christmas presents. There would be none from Aunt Agnes nor from Aunt Annabel, nor from Uncle George, nor from Uncle William, nor from Uncle Joseph. To the three last letters had been specially sent, requesting that they would send no presents to Peggy, and stating reasons. And then Peggy went up to the school-room, feeling that the blow had fallen, and that she might just as well have died (of consumption) during the night. She did not cry that day, nor the next. She was depressed, and realising the horrors of her fate slowly. On the evening of the third day, while at tea in the drawing-room with her two aunts, the culminating point was reached somewhat suddenly. She put down the piece of thin bread-and-butter on which she was engaged at the moment, and retired with quivering lip. Aunt Annabel listened outside the door, and heard Peggy's paroxysm of sobs. Then she went downstairs again to Aunt Agnes, paced the

She also accepted with absolute resignation the deprivation of all Christmas presents which was coming upon her. She had wept once, and it was over. You cannot bring the dead back again, neither can you, if you are a girl of twelve, alter the decrees of Aunt Agnes. She intended to do the best that she could with her Christmas. As the day drew very near and her virtue persisted, Aunt Agnes had graciously hinted that the sentence would be carried out in its most literal sense. There would be no presents, but on the other hand there would be no disapproval. There would even be gaiety. William Sprigg would probably be allowed out by then and would come to tea. Indeed, if no further breakdown occurred, the use of the bagatelle-table (a rare and precious privilege) would be accorded them. The decorations went up. The village grocer looked particularly pleased, and touched his hat obsequiously to Peggy Tomlinson in the village—a child with a fine appetite, with two wealthy aunts at the back of it, and, as such, a source of revenue.

Christmas Eve came. Peggy was in bed and asleep when parliament met.



Aunt Agnes extricated herself from tremendous difficulties.

drawing-room like a caged hyena, and groaned from sheer distress. Aunt Agnes looked grave.

"I also," she said, "am very sorry. I knew that in punishing her we should be inflicting some suffering upon ourselves. But, after all, one's duty must be done. A severe punishment was clearly required, and Peggy finds this severe. She so seldom cries about anything. At the same time, it is a punishment chosen with great care, not to injure her health in any way, or affect her education. We have done the best we can."

Aunt Annabel said she hoped and believed so, and went upstairs to listen outside the door again, which was weak of her, as this increased her agony.

Now it so happened that during the following weeks of December Peggy was remarkably and unusually angelic. This may in part have been due to the fact that Billy Sprigg was shut up at home with influenza, partly to the fact that the weather was not favourable to bicycling, partly to penitence, and partly to sheer luck. Peggy, like many other children, was a pronounced fatalist. There were days on which she had to be bad and days when she had to be good. She was pleased that Destiny had not chosen for her during these weeks a career of crime.

"I do not see," said Aunt Annabel firmly, "that any child could possibly have shown a sweeter disposition than Peggy has done of late."

Aunt Agnes admitted that Peggy had certainly been very thoughtful, that her conduct had been satisfactory, and that she did not take her punishment sulkily. "All of which," observed Aunt Agnes, "is to the good, and shows that we were right in the line we took."

"I do not quite know," said Aunt Annabel, with less firmness, "what you will think about it, but as I was in the village to-day I saw this little thing, and I—in fact, I bought it. It was not expensive."

Aunt Agnes surveyed it grimly. "What is it?" she asked.

"It is a cyclometer, an instrument you carry attached to a bicycle for some purpose or other—possibly to accelerate the speed in some way. I have frequently heard Peggy say that she wished she had one."

"I have no right," said Aunt Agnes with marked coldness, "to exercise any control over your actions, but if you break down and give the child this—er—this cyclo thing, my authority and yours over her will henceforth be dead. *Dead!* Do you understand me? That will mean that we shall have to send her to school."

Aunt Annabel at once capitulated unconditionally.

"You are not alone in your weakness," Aunt Agnes continued. "George, William, and Joseph have all sent the child presents, contrary to my expressed wishes. I shall not allow her to have them, and they will be returned as soon as the rush of Christmas traffic is over."

That closed the conference, and Aunt Agnes proceeded to a desperate but triumphant conflict with a new sort of Patience, containing complications that were almost diabolical.

At breakfast-time next morning Peggy, looking very pretty, and with the light of joy in her eyes, entered the breakfast-room, kissed both her aunts with enthusiasm, wished them a happy Christmas, and presented unto Aunt Agnes a set of Patience cards in a leather case, and to Aunt Annabel a book-mark, whereon was worked in coloured silks a sprig of forget-me-not, the words, "Hark, the herald angels sing!" and a bicycle, the whole being designed and worked by Peggy Tomlinson herself. Aunt Agnes thanked her warmly, spoke at some length of the use which these Patience cards would be to her, indicated the points in which they excelled all Patience cards which she had possessed previously, worked in one or two adroit compliments on Peggy's recent saintliness, and, speaking generally, charmed Peggy, which was what she had intended to do. Aunt Annabel said "Thank you!" and had great difficulty in saying anything else, in eating an egg, and in the control of her feelings generally. The cyclometer



The village grocer touched his hat obsequiously.

was in her pocket, ready at the least sign of relenting. It was some time after breakfast before she had so far pulled herself together that she was able to talk to Peggy about the book-mark, taking it for granted, of course, that Peggy had not done the work herself, and finding it still more astounding that the design also was due to the same inventive brain. In fact, things were going very smoothly when the parlourmaid entered, with the announcement that Master William Sprigg was in the library and had brought a present for Miss Tomlinson.

"I want to ask a favour," said Peggy, in a voice which really hardly trembled at all, "I know I am not to have any presents, but I don't want him to know. Would you mind if I went into the library and took what he's brought? I'll give it up to you the moment he's gone."

Then Aunt Agnes, with great perspicacity, trained by thousands of games of Patience, began to see possibilities.

"Yes," she said, "you may do that if you like, but you must let me have a little talk with William first. I have," she added with Machiavelian strategy, "a message for his mother."

In the library Aunt Agnes and William Sprigg shook hands gravely, and wished each other the compliments of the season.

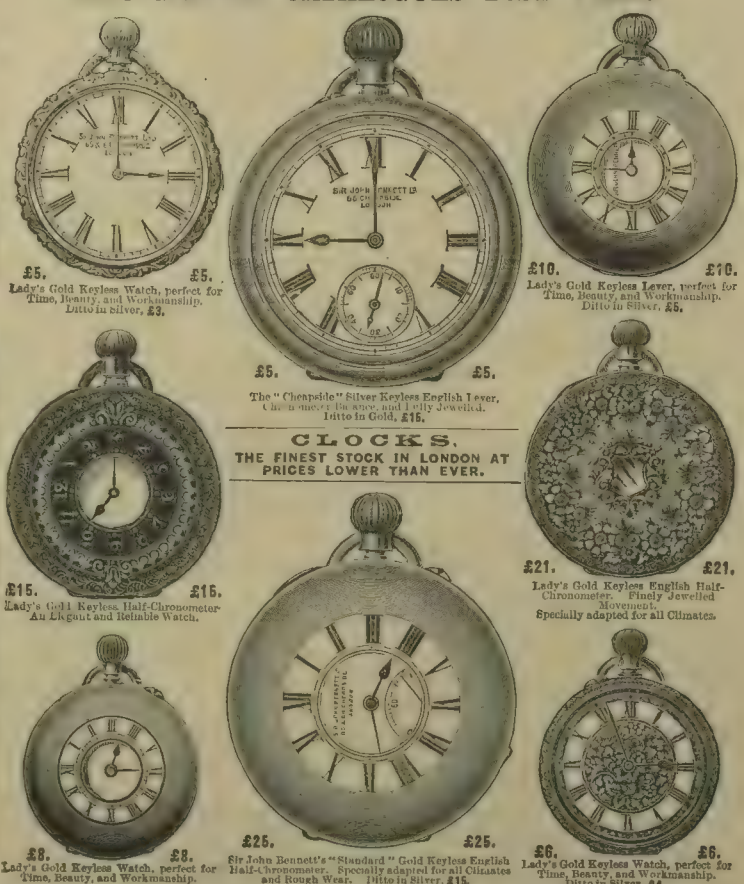
"William," said Aunt Agnes with directness, "can you tell me why Peggy came home wet through from being in the brook one afternoon in November?"

"Yes," said William, with a broad grin. "I threw the pug in, because all

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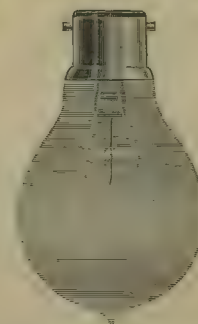
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dogs can swim; but the current was too strong for pugs, and he would have been done for if Peggy hadn't gone in and brought him out."

"And how is it," asked Aunt Agnes, with growing sternness, "that I have not heard of this before?"

"Well," said Billy, "I asked her rather particularly not to tell anybody, because there would have been such a row about the dog."

"It's a pity," said Aunt Agnes, "that you were not a little more thoughtful, but as it's Christmas-time I'll say no more about it to you. You shall see Peggy directly."

But Peggy never absolutely understood why, when she rendered up to Aunt Agnes the musical-box, playing three tunes, which she had just received from Billy,



"It didn't occur to you," said Aunt Agnes, "that you might be getting Peggy into great trouble by your cowardly conduct?"

"It didn't occur to you," said Aunt Agnes, by this time positively ferocious, "that you might be getting Peggy into great trouble by your cowardly conduct?"

"Well," said William, "it was a sort of exchange. I had got into rows through her, and we agreed I should get out of this one through her. However, I got into it all the same, because the mater caught me drying the dog at the greenhouse stove. I had the luck to get the influenza the next day, so the row didn't come to much after all. If only you're ill they can't do much to you. I had meant to tell Peggy she needn't keep it dark any more, but I wasn't allowed out. Then I meant to write, and then I forgot."

it was immediately returned to her, together with a perfect hailstorm of other presents—one absolute golden sovereign from Aunt Agnes, a cyclometer from Aunt Annabel, three gorgeous and expensive presents from her three uncles. Nor did she quite understand why she, Peggy herself, not having wept at her deprivation, should begin to blubber when the presents were given her, and she was told that she was a good little girl after all. However, it ended happily. Aunt Annabel showed herself particularly high-spirited and kittenish in the many games which were played that afternoon, and if it was all Fate, then Peggy Tomlinson was very well contented with Fate.

A SOCIAL REFORMER.

A DUOLOGUE.

[Acting Rights retained by the Author.]

LADY PATRICIA discovered seated, her hands crossed in her lap. Enter GWENDOLIN, looking very determined and defiant.

LADY PAT (*pleasantly*). That you, Gwen? Well, my dear, I've spoken to your father.

GWEN. I hope, mamma, that both you and he understand how determined I am to follow the dictates of my conscience in this matter?

LADY PAT (*with excessive amiability*). Oh, quite, my love. You have met this Mr. Digs—Digsly—

GWEN. Diggles.

LADY PAT. Diggles—slumming?

GWEN. At our Settlement, where earnest men and women meet for the purpose of bringing sweetness and light to those whom you, I suppose, would call the lower orders—

LADY PAT. I might, my love, but I won't when I am Mr. Diggles' mother-in-law.

GWEN. Oh! he is not ashamed of having risen from the ranks.

LADY PAT. Of course not; and the ranks, I am sure, must be equally proud of Mr. Diggles. He has risen—to a wine merchant's office?

GWEN. He writes books.

LADY PAT. Time enough to consider those when a publisher does. He also lectures in Hyde Park on Sundays, weather permitting. You oughtn't to be dull, Gwen.

GWEN. I refuse to recognise in the fellowship of noble thoughts and great aims these absurd class distinctions. I consider it just as great an honour to be asked in marriage by Mr. Diggles as by a Duke. I—

LADY PAT (*yawning*). Quite so, dear; but don't waste all this on me, keep it for Mr. Diggles.

GWEN. Oh, it's the principle I am fighting for. I didn't expect papa would allow me to see the man himself.

LADY PAT (*sarcastically*). Didn't you?

GWEN. Well, no; I thought you would both be so very indignant that—

LADY PAT (*with a laugh*). That's where your little chance of martyrdom would come in. Poor Gwen, and everything is to be made easy for her. We even think of sending you for a few weeks to stay with this Mrs. Marsh, who directs the Settlement. I hear she is quite a trustworthy woman.

GWEN (*aghast*). Why?

LADY PAT. Oh, my darling, think of all the things you have to learn before you are a properly qualified wife for Mr. Diggles. I suppose you will live in one of those sweet little flats with the staircase outside. What fun! But you really must learn how to broil a chop, Gwen. Don't—don't, I implore you, pop it in the frying-pan.

GWEN (*bursting into tears*). You are very cruel, Mamma. Do you suppose I can't see you are teasing me? You know very well I am not really going to marry the man, I just meant to show you how superior I was to—other girls.

LADY PAT (*roaring with laughter*). And poor papa was to do the dirty work. No, Gwen, social reformers don't have quite such a good time of it as all that. You feel that the world wants a lesson. Very good, marry the gentleman in the flannel shirt, and the lesson may be of value. (*As she rises to go.*) There—there—don't cry. By the way—I never asked you. Do you love the person?

GWEN (*sobbing*). No.

LADY PAT (*very gravely as she comes up to her*). Gwendolin, and you have so far encouraged him as to justify his proposing for you. Is that quite honourable?

GWEN. I never thought about it, I suppose I was so anxious to show him how little I cared who he was.

LADY PAT. That he mistook your meaning. Well, my dear, you must get out of it as best you can.

GWEN. Mamma, don't leave me. I'll never try to be superior again, if you will only help me.

LADY PAT. But you have only to say "No."

GWEN (*sobbing*). How can I? If papa is willing, Mr. Diggles won't see any reason for my refusing.

LADY PAT. Say you don't love him.

GWEN. Good gracious, he doesn't expect me to! He's far too advanced for that. He considers marriage a useful partnership, but he says love is absurd.

LADY PAT. Does he!

GWEN. He probably thinks I should be a help.

LADY PAT. You'd certainly be a draw for a Sunday morning or two in Hyde Park.

GWEN. But above all, his great idea is the mixing of the masses and the classes. He says Society is doomed unless that is brought about at once.

LADY PAT. Everyone to their taste; but before I'd marry a Mr. Diggles I'd let Society perish.

GWEN. But what a climb-down for me! I've agreed with all this. Sat at his feet, been a disciple, and now—now— (*A ring at the bell is heard outside.*) Mamma, there he is: for Heaven's sake stop him!

LADY PAT. But Gwen—

GWEN. Oh, you must! It's impossible! Somebody else must save Society; I won't!

LADY PAT. I am afraid you will have to see him.

GWEN. No. No. Tell Mills to say papa is out. Go on. Go on. (*LADY PATRICIA reluctantly crosses to door, half opens it, and then rapidly closes it again.*)

LADY PAT. Too late, my dear. Mills is just showing him into your father's study.

GWEN (*sinking into a chair*). Oh, if it isn't enough to stop any girl trying to do a little good! Here have I devoted my life to causes, when I might have led a butterfly existence, and this is my reward.

LADY PAT. I suppose you feel absolutely certain that he is going to propose?

GWEN. What else could he want with papa?

LADY PAT. I confess I don't see.

GWEN. And although his behaviour to me has been most respectful, I know that the dream of his life is that princesses and artisans may one day intermarry, quite simply and as a matter of course.

LADY PAT. H'm, the first couple to try it on may count on a good attendance at the wedding.

GWEN (*starting*). Is that papa's voice? Are they coming?

LADY PAT (*listening*). I think not.

GWEN. What can they find to talk about all this time?

LADY PAT. Your father's probably offered him a cigar. He never does things by halves.

GWEN (*horrified*). You think papa will be as amiable as all that! Who'd have thought it? His only daughter, too!

[Continued on Page 41.]

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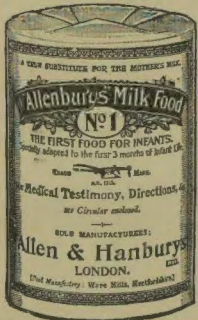
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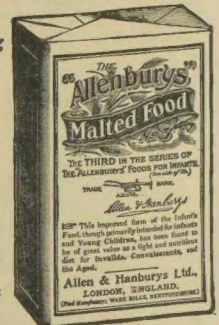
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LADY PAT. Fortunately.
GWEN. Mamma!

LADY PAT. Well, my dear, you don't suppose we should have liked half a dozen of you, do you?

GWEN (*contrite, going to her mother*). Oh dear, oh dear! I'm afraid I haven't been a pleasure or a comfort.

LADY PAT. There's no denying you've been a bit wasted on two people who find life rather pleasant than otherwise, and never had the least desire for a mission.

GWEN. It's all pretence. I am as commonplace a girl as any other, but I liked to fancy I was advanced and all that.

LADY PAT. And you don't really consider your father much too young for his years, and me a frivolous worldling?

GWEN (*patronisingly*). Oh no, not at all. I am sure if you were both to read a few serious works—

LADY PAT (*laughing*). And cultivate our minds. There you go. No, Gwen, you were meant for higher

things—better go through with the business and take this young man; he'll probably suit you better than poor Bertie FitzJames, who told me, with tears in his eyes, that you'd called him an inconsequent utility.

GWEN. You think I ought to marry Mr. Diggles? (LADY PAT shrugs her shoulders.) Perhaps he has been sent me as a punishment.

LADY PAT. He won't be the first husband that has fulfilled that useful purpose.

GWEN. I'll do it, mamma. I deserve no better fate. I'll be true to something, if it's only the cause of humanity. There they are. That was a door.

LADY PAT (*listening*). It sounded like the front door. (*She peeps out, and then turns round excitedly.*) It is. Mills has just shown him out. Gwen (*she shuts the door and stands with his back to it*), your father is coming this way.

GWEN. Don't let him see me. I'm too ashamed. Oh, mamma, what does it mean! Ask him.

LADY PAT. I will. (*She disappears for a second or*

two, GWEN sitting with clasped hands, her eyes fixed on the door, almost breathless with excitement. Re-enter LADY PAT.)

GWEN (*struggling to her feet, and almost under her breath*). Well?

LADY PAT (*trying not to laugh, and in the same tone*). Well!

GWEN. He's spoken to papa?

LADY PAT. He has.

GWEN. What? What? Oh, mamma!

LADY PAT (*slowly and gravely*). He said that, encouraged by Miss Nevern's kindness, he ventured to solicit Sir Thomas's patronage of a very sound claret his firm is placing on the market at a most reasonable price.

GWEN (*her eyes wide open, and with a gasp*). That's all he wanted?—to sell his wine!

LADY PAT (*apologetically*). Well, Gwen, it's the poor man's business, you know, and you are not—

GWEN (*hiding her face in her hands and dashing out of the room*). Oh, good gracious! (LADY PATRICIA, laughing merrily, seats herself as the curtain falls.)

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